

ATTENTION LANDLORDS

In Pennsylvania, the shift towards tamper-resistant and hardwired smoke detectors by December 31, 2024, aligns with new federal fire safety requirements. This mandate stems from the "Public and Federally Assisted Housing Fire Safety Act of 2022" (H.R. 7981), which requires property owners to install either hardwired smoke detectors or units with sealed, 10-year, non-replaceable batteries in federally assisted housing. This change is intended to enhance fire safety and prevent tampering or neglect, which can compromise smoke detector functionality.

Additionally, landlords must comply with National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 72 guidelines, which outline the proper placement and installation standards for smoke detectors in residential buildings. According to these standards, smoke detectors should be installed in each sleeping area, in hallways outside bedrooms, and on every level of the residence. For ceiling-mounted detectors, the installation height must follow specific distance guidelines to ensure optimal smoke detection.

In Pennsylvania, local jurisdictions may have additional requirements or stricter enforcement measures, so landlords should confirm compliance with both state and municipal fire codes. For Pennsylvania-specific details, reviewing local ordinances and checking with fire safety authorities or local government resources is recommended.

Policy Statement for Landlords: Smoke Detector Compliance Requirements by December 31, 2024

As of December 31, 2024, all landlords in Pennsylvania must comply with updated state and federal smoke alarm safety requirements, consistent with National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard 72 and federal codes. This policy applies to all rental properties and is essential to ensure tenant safety and reduce fire-related risks.

Key Compliance Requirements:

1. **Replacement of Non-Hard-Wired Smoke Detectors:**

By December 31, 2024, any smoke detectors in your properties that are not hard-wired must be replaced with units that meet the following criteria:

- **Tamper-Resistant Design:** Units must be tamper-resistant to prevent tenant interference or accidental deactivation.
- **10-Year Sealed Battery:** If the detector is battery-operated, it must contain a non-removable, non-replaceable battery designed to last at least 10 years.
- **Compliance with NFPA 72:** All new smoke detectors must be installed and maintained in accordance with NFPA 72 guidelines, ensuring proper placement, testing, and maintenance. NFPA 72 requires smoke detectors in each bedroom, outside each sleeping area, and on every level of the residence.

2. **Requirements for Hard-Wired Units:**

Properties with existing hard-wired smoke detectors are considered compliant if the units are functional, meet NFPA 72 installation standards, and are regularly tested and maintained.

3. Federal Standards and Compatibility:

Smoke detectors installed or replaced after December 31, 2024, must be compliant with all applicable federal codes and any additional state or local standards. Devices should be certified by an accredited body to ensure they meet safety and performance standards recognized by federal authorities.

4. Documentation and Compliance Records:

All landlords must document the installation, testing, and maintenance of smoke detectors for compliance verification. These records should include the installation date, type of device, and maintenance log for tenant safety records and inspections.

Enforcement and Penalties

Failure to comply with these regulations by the December 31, 2024, deadline may result in penalties, including fines and potential legal liability. Local authorities will be conducting inspections to ensure adherence to these guidelines.

By adhering to these updated standards, landlords can significantly improve the safety of their rental properties and reduce fire hazards. Thank you for your commitment to tenant safety and your compliance with these critical requirements.